

The World's Greatest Interpreter of Nietzsche Defines Our Lack of True Greatness

"As the American Women Are More Nearly Super-Women Than Your Men Are Super-Men, Why Not Take the Vote Away from the Men and Give It to the Women?" Says Dr. Oscar Levy, the Foremost Exponent of the "Superman" Idea.

By Franz Hugo Krebs.

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I HAD an interview yesterday which took up part of the morning, most of the afternoon and extended into the evening, with Dr. Oscar Levy, of London, the greatest authority on Nietzsche, and one of the world's greatest psychologists. Dr. Levy was born on March 28, 1867, in the town of Stargard in Pomerania. His father was a banker. Dr. Levy graduated from the Gymnasium in Stargard, then from the University of Freiburg, in Baden, where he was a member of the Albigia Corps, one of the fighting corps, which in accordance with German custom meets all challenges. Afterward Dr. Levy took post graduate courses in medicine and psychology in the Universities of Berlin, Munich, Vienna and Paris. For the last twenty years Dr. Levy's home has been in London, where he is a member of the Royal Societies Club, of the Royal College of Surgeons and Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians.

Dr. Levy is that most wonderful being, from an intellectual standpoint, a Jew who is absolutely free from any trace of commercialism and whose sole interest is in literary pursuit and research, regardless of material gain. On his mother's side, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there were six generations of Rabbis, and it is to them and to her that Dr. Levy attributes his mentality.

Dr. Levy told me of a most strange and interesting custom; he said that for centuries it was the custom for rich Jewish families living in Poland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy and France, to seek Talmudic scholars as husbands for some of their daughters. The wealth of the family was placed at their disposal, so that they could continue their studies, and in that way the love of learning and the longing for knowledge were kept alive in the race. Dr. Levy further said that, had it not been for this, the Jewish race would have ceased to exist as "no race purely commercial can live."

Dr. Levy spent a few weeks in the United States in 1892, but in spite of the travels that have taken him to all quarters of the globe he says, "A psychologist does not need to travel in order to know the people of the earth. A study of their literature reveals not merely their mental but racial characteristics as well." "But, Doctor," I asked, "do you mean that a psychologist can get to know as much about 'the people of the earth' from 'a study of their literature,' as those who travel in the countries and meet the people themselves?"

A Nation's Literature Its True Revealer.

"Not only as much, but far more, for the psychologist is mentally detached and views the subject of his inquiry from a distance; there is nothing between the subject he dissects and the scalpel of truth. For instance, Americans by hundreds of thousands have travelled through Great Britain and over the Continent; they have seen the outside of the buildings and probably the inside of some; also they have seen the outside of the people. How much do they know of their thoughts and aspirations?"

"Americans are the most optimistic of all the nations; properly directed, this spirit will accomplish wonders, but when the American comes to Europe he indulges himself mentally much as he does at home, and slurs over the rough places unless his personal comfort is disturbed. The American readily forgets White Chapel; it is so much pleasanter to remember the West End; he forgets the awful slums of the large cities in Great Britain, the unspeakable degradation of the drunken, sodden, submerged tenth; it is so much pleasanter to remember the beautiful lawns, where the tender care of generations has produced a velvet sward that cannot be equalled for years to come in the New World."

"It is sweeter to remember the charming and cultivated people that one meets, whose cultivation is not that of today or yesterday, but the outgrowth of generations of well-to-do and cultivated ancestors. It is interesting at this time, when a deputation from the leading ship-building firms has waited on the Chancellor of the British Exchequer and the Secretary for Scotland to urge that 'there should be a total prohibition during the period of the war of the sale of excisable liquors,' and when Lloyd George in his reply said, 'That nothing but root and branch methods would be of the slightest avail in dealing with this evil,' and further said, 'We are fighting Germany, Austria and Drink; and as far as I can see, the greatest of these three deadly foes is Drink,' to realize that Disraeli, the greatest British statesman of all times, described in 'Sybil,' the preface to which is signed by him as of May-Day, 1845, the condition of the masses of the British people. A perusal of this book, at this time, would do much to enlighten Americans whose mentality is rugged enough to consider painful subjects. As Disraeli said: 'There is not a trait in this work for which he has not the authority of his own observation, or the authentic evidence which has been received by Royal Commissions and Parliamentary Committees. But while he hopes he has alleged nothing which is not true, he has found the absolute necessity of suppressing much that is genuine.'"

"How can any even ordinarily keen observer be blind to the fact that the soul of the British lower classes living in the cities and large towns is rotted away by drink, and that as



Dr. Oscar Levy, the Distinguished Scholar

By DR. OSCAR LEVY.

THE only things that live forever are great thoughts.

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are remembered, although the kings of their time are one and all forgotten.

Nietzsche will be read when no one but a student of ancient history will remember the name of one of the rulers now at the head of the countries waging this greatest of all wars.

America has produced a high average man, as far as strength, quickness of thought and general well-being are concerned; but mentally the United States has contributed little to the world along the lines of really great thought.

As a matter of fact, the American woman is far higher intellectually, in proportion to the female sex in other parts of the world, than is the American man, in proportion to the male sex.

This does not seem to me desirable, and indicates that for generations to come American thought is likely to be lacking in virility.

In the world's history, no woman philosopher or psychologist has added to its knowledge. Another unfortunate feature in connection with the unequal development of American men and women is that so many of your women find out too late that their husbands are not their mental mates.

This is doubtless largely responsible for the great increase of divorce in America.

I am opposed on principle to a democratic form of government; I do not believe in the rule of the fit by the unfit.

As to woman suffrage, if one is forced to accept a democratic form of government, why not be logical and have a pure democracy, regardless of sex?

De Tocqueville said, in his great book on the United States: "The only cure for democracy is more democracy."

It is a sad situation to contemplate, but as the American women are more nearly superwomen than your men are supermen, why not take the vote away from the men and give it to the women? They probably would not do worse than the men, and your form of government is only a happy-go-lucky experiment.

far as they are concerned 'Christian England' is non-existent."

I then asked Dr. Levy, "What does Nietzsche mean to you?"

"Nietzsche is the great teacher, not of the masses, but of the individual. He teaches that the first duty of the individual is to himself. By raising himself, he will then be in a better position to help others. He points the way to self-culture and self-development, not to the unthinking many, but to those who have the capacity for intellectual improvement. He preaches egotism, but it is the egotism of self-renunciation. His egotism is not a brutal, but rather an ascetic egotism. Nietzsche did not believe in a superman without tenderness, and that tenderness means due consideration based upon knowledge of others."

"No captains of industry who walk over the corpses of their fellowmen and then found libraries and hospitals in order to ease their conscience would be considered supermen by Nietzsche. They might be considered supermen by the business world, but not in that higher culture that Nietzsche had in view."

In answer to my question as to whether he believed that it was desirable that Nietzsche should be generally read, Dr. Levy replied:

"Nietzsche ought NOT to be generally read. No one but a person with more than the average education, or with much more than the average mentality can, as a rule, profit by Nietzsche. There are many mentalities to whom he would only do harm; they would lose the smaller virtues they now possess, and they would gain nothing to replace them."

"In Japan the Samurai, who are still very powerful and whose traditions are most aris-

toocratic, will probably profit by Nietzsche's teachings." (It is of interest to know that Nietzsche is being studied at the Japanese Military College.)

"I believe in an aristocracy, but in an aristocracy of the mind, not of the skin. The time is coming when the white and the brown and the yellow men will meet in combat for the mastery of the world; the Samurai, with their code of 'Bushido' will prove worthy antagonists for any branch of the white race."

"Was Nietzsche liked in Germany during his life?" I asked.

"Nietzsche was absolutely hated in Germany, while he was alive, and the hatred did not diminish after his death. He advised the Prussian aristocracy to marry Jewesses in order to quicken their mental processes. He might well have added Italian, French, Russian, Polish, Irish and American women. You see, their, that is, the Prussian aristocracies, muscles and hearts are in good condition, but the working of the cerebrum needs quickening."

"What is your opinion of Ralph Waldo Emerson?"

"He was not extraordinary, but interesting and pleasing."

"Who are the greatest German psychologists?"

"There are no German psychologists, that is, of pure German blood. Schopenhauer had Dutch blood from his father. Helne was of Jewish blood, and Nietzsche's Polish blood gave him to the world."

In answer to the question, what do you mean when you say that "in international and political psychology Great Britain is supreme?" Dr. Levy said: "When war was decided on,

the British immediately secured control of all cables going to America and by their clever dispatches and their knowledge of mob psychology lashed the American people into a perfect frenzy, so that the most absurd stories, that would not even pass muster among intelligent English people, were readily believed."

"For instance, when the report was sent out that the Kaiser had forbidden mourning to be worn by women in Germany, that was not a haphazard invention, but was evidently written by one who not only understood that wearing mourning was the normal outward expression of grief on the part of American women, but also realized fully that America is a woman's country. In a thousand and one ways the British showed that they could play the master touch on American follies and prejudices. It is nothing new; it has for many years been well understood that when Great Britain attacks, it is not only by her navy and her land forces, but by the news agencies and the press as well. Yes, as political psychologists they are wonderful."

"Although my sympathy has always been with the Tory party, as the party of the aristocracy, I realize that Lloyd George is an idealist, and that he and the masses of the Liberal party would not have supported the war had it not been for the violation of the neutrality of Belgium."

"Recent admissions by Liberals regarding the neutrality of Belgium not being an absolute controlling factor in the war clearly indicate that they wish to counteract the growing feeling, 'Well, if we only went to war on account of Belgium we are about ready to quit.'"

"I can see nothing ahead of the Liberal party but a smashing defeat at the next general election. My sympathy has always been with the Tory party in Great Britain, not merely because it is the aristocratic party, but because it is really a Nietzschean party, although the masses and even many of its leaders are not intelligent enough to know it."

To the question, are there any men who have been prominent in American history whom you would consider supermen? Dr. Levy replied:

"Most decidedly yes. There are two, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. George Washington was an aristocrat to his finger tips; he never craved the applause of the vulgar or the numerous. No personal ambition prompted him to bring about the freedom of his countrymen from British misrule. Not a man of mental warmth, he yet had the tenderness that springs from due consideration based upon knowledge of others."

Washington and Lincoln Supermen.

"Abraham Lincoln, in spite of his humble birth and his lack of advantages of ordinary education, was one of the world's greatest aristocrats, because he belonged to the highest aristocracy of all—the aristocracy of the mind. One of the masses, he had a mind that towered above theirs—as the ever snow-covered peaks of the Himalayas tower above the plains that lie around their base. Abraham Lincoln had, to the greatest extent, the tenderness which leads to due consideration based upon an absolute knowledge of others. Lincoln was not merely a superman in America, he was a king in the mental aristocracy of the world."

"How about Theodore Roosevelt? Roosevelt could not be called a superman, unless it were of the obvious. Up to the time that his desire for political office became so strong as to partly obscure his mental vision, he was very skillful in finding out the average American thought and then announcing it as his opinion. In America such a policy would inevitably lead to success, but it carries with it a silent valuation of the adoption of such a standard."

"How about President Wilson? That is a question that I am not prepared as yet to definitely answer. There are questions that President Wilson has yet to deal with that will have great bearing on how it should be answered. President Wilson is not only a man of high intellectual attainments, but he is a man of remarkable mental power and force. He is a bit of a philosopher and has great will power."

"The United States has been very fortunate in having had in all crises of its history the very man at the helm who was mentally best fitted to deal with that particular situation. The time will come when there will be need of creating a mental aristocracy in America, whose aims and ideals will be far above those of the masses. There is and always should be a great amount of mental mediocrity in the world; this is necessary for civilization, but why extend its area beyond reason?"

I asked Dr. Levy why he lived in London, and he said: "Because, while the world over, thought is free and unshackled, in Great Britain the spoken or written expression of thought is freer than in any other country."

"Than in the United States?"

"Infinitely. Were the United States at war there would be no room for a Bernhard Shaw within its boundaries."

"At present America has evolved the greatest area of middle-class mentality that the world has ever known, with all the virtues and all the smallness that are characteristic of a middle-class mentality."

Why China's Women Should Be Ardent Suffragists

Plural Marriages, Domestic Slavery, the Slaving of Infant Girls and Other Evils Which Might Be Abolished if Chinese Women Could Gain Their Rights.

By Edith Blake, Distinguished Traveller and Writer.

THE power of Chinese parents over their children is supreme, and has the force of the law behind it. Should a son or daughter be even guilty of using abusive language to parents or paternal grandparents, and should the parents make complaint to a magistrate that they themselves heard such language, the delinquent is liable to death by strangulation;

In the matter of marriage, girls are not given much choice in the selection of the future husband, but neither has the man the choice of his bride. As is often the case in Ireland, marriages are made by match-makers, not by heaven.

So long as her parents-in-law live the son's wife is subordinate to them; even in England a mother-in-law is not always regarded with favor, and as Chinese women are as human in their feelings and tempers as are those of other races, even the rigidity of Celestial etiquette does not invariably suffice to insure agreeable relations between a mother-in-law and her son's wife.

There is only one legal wife in China; she is the Kit-fat, and she alone is carried to the bridegroom's house in the red sedan chair. The necessities of ancestral worship, however, have led to the habit—usual, but not universal—of the existence of one or more secondary wives or concubines, whose presence does not always increase the harmony of the household.

To the Kit-fat belongs whatever of dignity and importance attaches to the family, but as she has been selected to fill the position without the husband having had much voice in the matter, should she not meet with his approval, he generally consoles himself by taking a secondary wife chosen by himself. The Kit-fat may be legally divorced on seven accounts: if she has no children; if she proves immoral; if she has no children; if she proves immoral; if she is disobedient to her husband's parents; over-talkative; given to thieving; if she is jealous; or afflicted with leprosy.

This sounds a very comprehensive series of reasons; yet in point of fact none of them can be urged if the wife has observed mourning during three years for her husband's parents; if the family has become wealthy, having been poor when she married; or if her parents are dead, so that she cannot return to them; so it is easier and pleasanter to take a secondary wife than to get rid of a first one, and divorces are consequently more rare than elsewhere.

Little girls are brought up to look forward to marriage as their goal in life; but when the desired end is about to be attained, etiquette prescribes that the bride-elect must weep or pretend to do so for three days previous to the wedding, so as to display fitting regret at leaving the paternal roof. A broom is the emblem of her new duties as a wife; the day after the wedding the bride takes a broom—in wealthy families symbolically, in poor ones actually—and sweeps the house.

The women have great tenacity of purpose, and do not flinch from death when a sense of duty makes them resolve on committing suicide. It is regarded as meritorious in a widow to die with her husband, and the custom of widows so immolating themselves still exists. Such a ceremony took place in 1861 at Amoy with much pomp. The widow, who was only twenty-five years of age, had no children or parents, so resolved on following her husband to the spirit land.

A few days before the one on which she had appointed to die she was carried round the town in a wedding chair, not closed as at an actual wedding, but open, so that all might see her as she passed. She invited the people to come to see her make her exit from this life. She was accompanied by a procession such as is seen at weddings. On the day fixed for her death, attired in richly embroidered wedding garments of red silk, with a gilt coronet such as is worn by brides, and seated in the same chair, the young woman was carried to the scaffold.

There she got out of the chair, and without displaying any emotion, calmly sat down and partook of refreshment prepared on a lower platform of the scaffold. When the meal was finished she addressed the surrounding crowd, and, taking some handfuls of uncooked rice from a bowl which stood on the table, she scattered it among the people, who eagerly scrambled to secure a few grains sanctified by her blessing. She then ascended to the upper scaffold, with her own hands passed the noose around her neck, and in a few moments all was over.

Kidnapping little girls to sell as slaves is a regular trade in China, where domestic slavery exists, though those who steal the children are liable to severe punishment if detected. Once the children are smuggled away from the neighborhood of their homes it is difficult to bring the crime home to its perpetrators. The lot of many of the unfortunate little girls so carried off is frequently as sad as that of the victims of the "white slave" traffic of Europe.

Little girls are often dressed as boys to obviate the danger of their being abducted by kidnappers; whereas small boys are sometimes clothed in feminine garments with the object of preventing interference with the child's soul by malignant spirits.

The custom of exposing or destroying infant girls is often quoted as proving the indifference to female life in China. It is true the practise is common among the very poor, who cannot afford to furnish the necessary dowry should their daughters grow up and marry. The law that married daughters are not called upon to contribute to the support of their own parents, but must do so for their parents-in-law, is largely accountable for the custom of girl infanticide, which is seldom resorted to by those who are better off.